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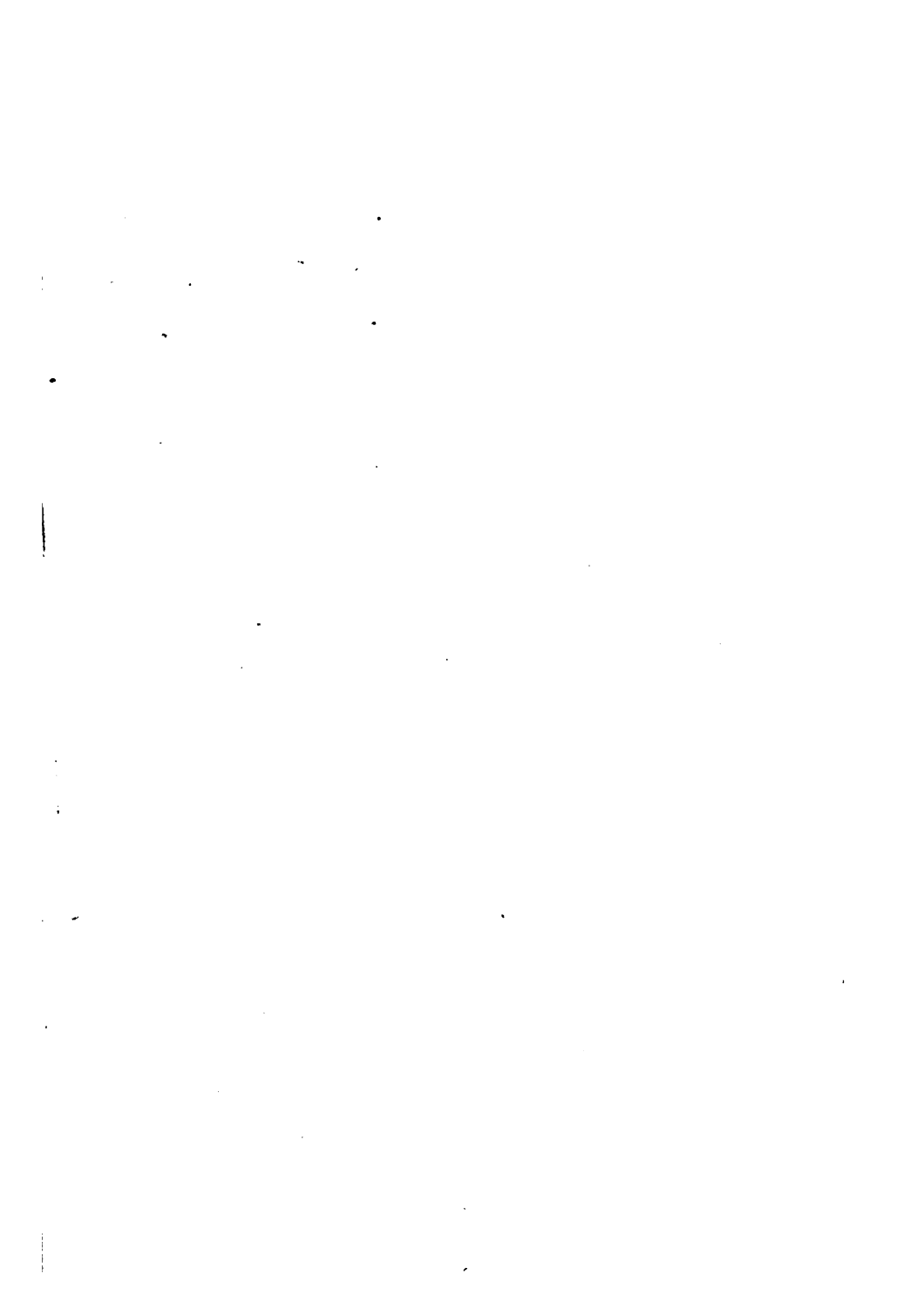
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THE MAKING OF A HOME

ITS PRACTICAL
RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL
FOUNDATIONS

BY

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PRESERVATION MASTER
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**TO
MY DAUGHTER
MARY BUCK LAWTON**

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I

HOME, THE CORNER STONE

The home is the center around which cluster the holiest and highest associations. The idea of home is invested with rare beauty and the thought of home is charged with tenderest emotions. Mother, home, and heaven are the most beautiful words in our wide reaching language, and the three are segments of a sacred circle. The home instinct has planted itself deep into the universal heart and the home idea has wrought itself permanently into the fibers of society. Every worthy young man dreams a few dreams and sees the outlines of a few splendid visions, and one of these is a dream and a vision of a home built upon the foundations of a noble love. The dream stirs his heart to finer issues and fires his soul with loftier ambitions, and life is enriched by the sheer force of the home idea and the dream of home. The character of the homes of a nation shapes the character and the destiny of that nation, for no nation can rise higher than its individual homes. Verily, the home is the fountain of a nation's life, even as Niagara Falls finds its source in

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the Great Lakes. If we would build a great nation we must first build great homes; if we would reform the politics of a country, we must first reform the character of the homes that produce the politicians and the voters; if we would realize the sociological dream of the Sermon on the Mount, we must proceed by the way of the home; if we would reconstruct the great business world and inject into it more unselfish methods and humanitarian ideals, we must go back to the home. The political, the sociological, the business world, all departments of human activity, are merely projections and logical expressions of the one fundamental and abiding source, and this source shapes the form and paints the color of the various ramifications of human thought and human conduct.

Occupying as it does the pivotal point in society and creating as it does the modes of conduct and forms of thought of the body politic, the home becomes a subject of transcendent importance and engrossing interest alike to the pulpit and the press, the school and the moral reformer — and even the lawmaker may enter in with sane and wholesome laws, protecting the right and emphasizing the sanctity of the home. The pulpit, in the very nature of the case, can exert the greatest influence of all the agencies from without, and after the pulpit the press. But the pulpit will never accomplish its ap-

pointed task nor fulfill its divine mission in this vital need by investing itself with a conventional, prudish and prim squeamishness, and wrapping about itself the swaddling clothes of mock modesty. It must speak out bold and clear. It must rise above the evil-begotten whisperings and criticisms of a few prissy, squeamish, meddling members of every congregation from Dan to Beersheba. It must probe into the inner life of home and heart, and finding the fault and the failure, fearlessly administer the remedy and lay down gospel standards of home purity, home duties, home sacrifices, and home activities. This does not mean that the pulpit must degenerate into a busy body and play the rôle of an indelicate meddler in the private affairs of men and women, but it does mean that the mission of the pulpit extends to the utmost bounds of human thought and human life, and especially to the very source of life. This being true, it is not only a God given right, but a divinely commanded duty to regulate the conduct and shape the thought and mold the character of individual homes in love, in firmness, in judgment, and in statesmanship.

In our modern age, when ideals are changing, new thought is the order of the day, and a certain laxness and looseness characterize much of present day home ethics and conduct, it is well

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for us to take stock, to see to it that the sacredness of our homes is kept inviolate, and to hold fast to at least a few lofty ideals and tall dreams of what constitutes a home. This is an old subject, but like sunrise and sunset and starshine and a great mother's love, it is ever new.

II

WHY PEOPLE MARRY

We are born, marry, and die — these are the three supreme events in life. We have no choice in the first and last; we have in the second. It is ours to choose a life-mate, a help-mate. True, many fail to win their choice, but it is still theirs to choose, and after all, it is better to fasten our eyes on an unattainable white ideal and go through life with a hungry heart than to make an ignoble choice founded upon lower motives. It is better to strive for a rare prize and fail than to contend for a second rate prize and win. The zest of life is in the race as well as in the goal.

What shall we choose? Many, far too many, choose money. Let us see for a moment what is involved in the choice of money. Love is insulted and dethroned. The coterie of tender associations that cluster about the rare form of love is outraged. The idyllic and poetic are swept out of life. Materialism, selfish-souled, ruthless-hearted materialism, enters in as king and queen of the home. Self respect is lost. The finer senses are blunted. The beautiful

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dreams once entertained as royal guests come back, flotsam and jetsam. The soul shrinks and shrivels. The heart loses its early lilt and bound and grows sick and faint. Home life resolves itself into a miserable series of hollow mockeries and barren forms masquerading in the guise of eternal verities. Money is a splendid thing, an absolutely necessary medium of exchange for the perfection and perpetuation of all phases and spheres of human activity, and when it is rightly used it becomes a powerful instrument in the hands of God to carry forth the divine plans and consummate the dreams of Christ touching the redemption of the world. And moreover, money in the home lends a certain dignity and relish to the home, provided it is servant and not master and provided it play no part in the marriage pact. But when a woman is so swayed by the almighty dollar and so swept away by the subtle currents of materialism as to sell her body and soul for money, then money becomes a conscienceless, brutal, shameless instrument employed by Satan to further his diabolical plans. What shall it profit a woman if she gain the whole world of money bought things and lose her soul to a man so base-born as to buy the soul of a woman with dollars? Verily, she hath chosen the evil part and drawn her lines in hard places. And a man who marries solely for money has no

clearer idea of the epic in life than a prairie chicken has of the beauty of the Grand Cañon or of the grandeur of Niagara.

Many marry for prestige of one kind or another. Comes along an ambitious youth with a commercialistic dream or so and scant supply of prestige and power, who sees in a certain match an opportunity to further his interests and increase his prestige along the lines of his cherished dreams. Forgetful of the sacredness and the seriousness of marriage, forgetful of the sin against love, forgetful of the certain penalties of a loveless marriage, he rushes into an unholy alliance in order to gain prestige and lay hold of power. Another man has amassed a fortune, gained power, and made a name, but is limited in his supply of good blood. He is not happy because of his social limitations, but he has the money and the prestige necessary to purchase the commodity that is so commonly for sale, and straightway he marries him a wife, with name and lineage — and another miserable couple launches another empty home to the tune of another series of hollow mockeries and barren conventionalities. For prestige, for power, for name, for position, men and women are selling their bodies and their souls and living together in the sacred name of love under the roofs of houses they call homes. Small wonder that there are so many home failures.

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Some men choose beauty, personal appearance, charm of personality. A man meets a woman who fascinates him by her beautiful face and perfect form. He is swept away by the tides of a ceiling-high passion that passes away with the passing of spring. Losing sight of the fundamentals, forgetful of the realities that last for all time, and strangely oblivious to the higher call, he plunges recklessly into a wild cat scheme that must needs end in wasted, shrivelled, shrunken manhood and womanhood or in a modern fashionable divorce. This is not a stricture on beauty. Nothing short of the hand of God could fashion a lily, a rose, a morning star, and a beautiful woman. But a rose fades and a beautiful woman loses her bloom of youth, and the beauty that is destined to last but a handful of fleeting years. And what is more tragic, more passing pitiable than a wrinkled brow, a bent form, and a spent youth without the leaven of a pure love and the abiding light that shines in a great affection?

Then, a large number of people marry for mere convenience. A woman is nearing thirty or perchance has unfortunately passed that dreaded age. The consciousness of possible single misery dawns upon her. She has been taught by her sex from time immemorial that it is a disgrace to be an old maid. She has a

horror of the state. It haunts her. What *will* her fellow women think of her inability to win a husband? Her pride is wounded too. Other women get married; why can't she? And so, haunted by these ancestral fears and harassed by these feminine doubts, she straightway wilts when almost any old thing comes along and says: "Wilt thou?" I have known really great women fall victims to this absurd, foolish, and unreasonable fear. How much more preferable to be a single woman living a beautiful, useful, and rich life than married to a stick, a corn stalk, or a negative quantity dressed in pants and living in a state of physical, mental, and spiritual innocuous desuetude.

Another woman wants a home. She needs a home. Nobody seems especially to want her. She is first in no life. The future is uninviting. She marries for a home. Even the love idealist must grant that she might be guilty of greater weaknesses. A man has lost his wife. His life lies ahead of him. Perchance there are little children. He marries again. Some censure him; others approve. The love idealist holds that love is love forevermore, that the door of the heart is locked and no other can enter in, that the altar fires must be kept burning until the perfect day of a reunion under celestial conditions. But all will agree that an old, broken

old, because true love fastens its eyes upon the things that do not pass away, but rather grow richer and more beautiful with the passage of the years. Age only softens and enriches the soul. When two people love each other's souls, then the passing years merely serve to bind them closer together with the golden chain of love. In any marriage founded upon anything less than an abiding soul passion, there is at least a possibility of a failure, for in every home occasions and circumstances arise to bind closer together those who love or separate with an ever widening gulf those who love not. Love is not dependent upon what the object loved possesses, or can do, but is its own excuse for being and loves for reasons far above possessions or power or fame. And love covers a multitude of shortcomings in the beloved object by idealizing it, that which is loved being not the man or the woman as they really are but an objectified idealization. And no other force or power can accomplish this feat save love.

If two people of good character, congenial in temperament, blood, and tastes, and old enough to know their own minds and to recognize the soul element in love, are persuaded that they love each other with a quenchless passion, they shall consummate their love in spite of the protest of friends and in spite of adverse circumstances. A woman must leave her father and

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her mother and cleave unto her husband. She is primarily concerned in the marriage. Parents have no right to choose husbands and wives for their sons and daughters. It is theirs to object when the character of the person concerned is vicious or when circumstances are such that beyond the shadow of a doubt the marriage would be a calamity. But to choose for their children is beyond their prerogative. Love is a subtle, unaccountable, indefinable, and elusive thing. What does a parent know about the qualities that will win the heart of a girl? This thing of a mother making matches for her daughters by taking advantage of the maternal influence, and thereby irrevocably fixing her daughter's future life for all time, is not only serious business, but often a vicious interference with a God-given right. And this thing of objecting to a man of high character and moral fibre on account of some 2x4 pusillanimous squeamish whim is monumental in its selfishness and colossal in its unwisdom. But in this age with so many light, frivolous, frisky, thoughtless, modern girls this God-given right is so sinned against by the girl herself, that without unusual discernment, it is almost impossible for a mother to know when her girl is possessed of any high degree of soul-power. But I am speaking of sensible girls, not typical modern featherweights. The Lord have mercy upon them, for they need it.

III

WHOM TO MARRY

It may be of help to some to give a concrete picture of the type of man and the type of woman essential to an ideal home. This does not mean that no home is great unless it conforms to this standard, nor yet that this is the only type of man and woman capable of making an ideal home. But these qualities or at least similar and kindred qualities are necessary for the largest and highest expression of home life and home making. In choosing a man for your husband, my friend, remember first of all that the man you are about to marry is going to be the father of your children. Are you willing for that? If you are, then you want to make sure that his character is above reproach, that his spirit is big and white, and that his heart is generous and true. You want to ascertain whether he has been good to his mother and sister and how he treats dumb and helpless animals. Then you have a right to know his attitude to sacred things, his conception of God, his attitude to the Church, how he conducts himself in relation to holy things of every shade

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and description. A young man who mocks God and scoffs at religion and makes fun of the ministry and laughs at holy things is fundamentally at fault, and with such your home will be built upon a foundation of sand which will be swept away by the first storm of adversity. I do not mean to imply that nothing but a pious, saintly, sanctified Church fiend can make a successful husband. On the contrary, this very kind sometimes fails more egregiously than the out-and-out non Christians. Some folks say he is so good that his thoughts are continually soaring above the earth, and as the home is built upon the earth, he makes a poor husband. He would be a greater success in a house not made with hands. But do not believe this for a moment. All is not goodness that smacks of piety.

The best man makes the best husband. The most beautiful homes are those in which dwell men and women who are holiest of heart and grandest in soul. The religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is peculiarly adapted to the home. There above every other place in life religion is needed and Christianity counts for most. Show me a home whose inmates are genuine followers of the Man of Galilee, and I will show you a home where love is enthroned, peace has its abode, kindness is a constant visitor, tenderness is practiced, and happiness knows no

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bounds. The followers of the Son of God are home makers.

Where there is faith

There is love.

Where there is love

There is Peace.

Where there is Peace

There is God.

Where there is God

There is no need.

Therefore, if the man you love is a Christian, you are thrice blessed. He will render you happy — if not for your sake, for Christ's sake, for Christians have a way of trying to make people happy for Christ's sake. If your prospective drinks, you will do well to let him remain where he is, unless you feel your life work to be a drunkard's slave and a missionary to a beast. He will insist that he is going to stop. And he may while he is your sweetheart. And you will be flattered. And you will very likely marry him in spite of the stare of the wise and the world's derision. And in a sense you will be doing a big, heroic, brave thing, an idealistic thing. But you will also be doing a silly thing, for unless your husband is thoroughly converted and becomes a genuine follower of the stainless Christ, he will return to his bottle in spite of the war of elements, the wreck of matter, the crash of worlds, and your copious tears.

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Few forces short of a big slice of old time religion will finally and permanently save a drunkard. And you had better be careful about these men who think a social drink *the* thing, for social drinking has sent more men to the devil than you care to believe.

Do not marry a crank on any subject. He will make you unhappy. If you are not a genius plus two dreams, he will prize his fad more than he does you. He is warped, twisted, crooked, contorted, and unbalanced, therefore is not normal, and being abnormal, will make an unsuccessful husband. And you should beware a man whose dreams hover around flesh pots. Flesh pots are dangerous. A man misses the glory of the stars when he keeps his eyes fastened on flesh pots. And, if you are really a great woman, your married life will be unendurable without an occasional joy ride of the soul among the stars. You want a man grand in soul; sweet of nature; pure of heart; big in spirit; true to a few abiding verities; strong in principle; refined in tastes; gentle in his strength and strong in his gentleness; capable of fine sweeps of primal emotions but constrained in his expression thereof: moved to infinite reaches of tenderness by sufficient cause, but free from effeminacy; loving great music and great books and beautiful flowers without being a crank about any; free from any marks of laziness and

lack of ambition, for such things maketh the heart of a great wife sick; and loving his wife more than all else on earth — this is the sort of man you want for a husband if you are going to make an ideal home.

And this man should not marry a typical modern girl. She is a study. Her name is legion. Her tribe multiplies all too fast. She lives in cities generally, but the germ has penetrated certain country districts. She is a bunch of frills and furbelows and finery. She is lightweight and fantastic. Her clothes generally cost more than she is worth, and sometimes more than her father is worth. She lives on excitement and engagements and candy. This young lady may evolve into a woman, but all evidences and circumstances point to the contrary, because she habitually, willfully, and deliberately engages in such spiritually demoralizing pleasures and pastimes that her higher nature is quenched, her seriousness of purpose thwarted, her finer emotions atrophied, and her whole nature shriveled and shrunken. To her high society is a full-grown god: to her several engagements at one and the same time with as many men is a brilliant achievement; to her a dance until twilight on the wrong side of the day and much popularity at said dance is a high spot in the march of progress; to her a morning nap ending promptly at ten o'clock

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while her tired mother (who, by the way, is more tired than sensible, else she would train her children differently) wears herself out and causes her husband to wish he were worn out — to her this is “awfully cute.” The modern girl and high society are conditioned one upon the other. They could not thrive apart. They are the cause and the continuation of each other. High society is a selfish, narrow, thirsty, godless, conscienceless monster, feeding and fattening upon the souls of silly, sentimental, pleasure-loving, selfish, prideful, and painfully lightweight young folks, whose brains, if stewed down and packed into the head of an English sparrow, said English sparrow wouldn't have sense enough to get out of a shower of rain. In all of our praying let us pray fervently and devoutly to be delivered from a typical, lightweight, modern, high society woman, and let us pray that the good Lord may deliver them from themselves.

She must think more of a heart than a hat and less of a bank note than a soul value. Your wife should know that she loves you more than she ever could love any other man — and she must be capable of loving you so much that every other consideration in life, whether of dollars or fame, pleasure or dress, luxury or ease, resolves itself into a consuming, transforming passion for the man she loves, passing in music

out of sight, melting into the scale of love, swelling the one, eternal, abiding, absorbing love of her life. (Then, of course, if you fail to give her all the incidentals, provided you can, and she would relish them, you are an ingrate.) You do not want your wife actually to give up anything or everything for you, but you want to know that she is made of the sort of stuff to do it, provided it were necessary. She should be a woman of rare spirit; spotless soul; crystalline honor; lily-pure heart; sweet nature; beautiful character; a quenchless thirst after righteousness; an abiding allegiance to the beautiful and the true; an exquisite refinement of sympathy; a triumphant resolve to conquer adversity and misfortune; a passion for motherhood; vast sweeps of compassion and pity; a burning hatred of evil and sham and baseness; a rare appreciation of the aesthetic; and a peace that is born of daily fellowship and communion with God. With two such people as principals in a home, life will be highly worth living, the Christ will be a frequent visitor, the whole community will be blessed by the gracious currents of life that flow from it, and those who enter will go away refreshed in spirit and lifted in soul. Such homes are the dreams after which the idealists are reaching, but they will never be realized until such qualities or kindred qualities are found in the makers of homes.

IV

THE WEDDING DAY — AND AFTER

Marriage is a beautiful conception, a noble institution, a divinely approved custom. It begins with the idyllic union in the Garden of Eden and will be in force until the last vestige of human life is swept from the face of the earth. Marriage is sacred in the sight of God. There is nothing holier on earth than the blending of two kindred souls and the binding of two kindred spirits in the holy bonds of wedlock. The marriage ceremony legalizes the union, but the real marriage ceremony is performed in the celestial cathedral with God as priest, the angels as audience, and the choir invisible rendering the wedding march. That is, if two people follow the Christ as nearly as possible and look to God for guidance and direction in both large and small things. Surely God will lead us in this the most important step in life if we trust Him. Why not? All marriages are not made in heaven for the simple reason that so many people shut God out of their lives, but if we trusted Him as we should, all marriages would be made in heaven. But that does not mean

that God would do everything, any more than He runs His Church on earth. It simply means that under the leadership of God we would be enabled to choose a God-given soul-mate, and the happiness and peace and success of our home would be insured.

When people truly and genuinely love each other and the primal, elemental powers of the soul are brought to play in their love, then in the highest sense they are already married, for the marriage of souls is a greater and grander conception than the legal ceremony. The soul is the *summum bonum* of human life. It stands alone as the only abiding entity in the whole sweep of created entities. It is in reality of the same substance as God, for in our souls we are fashioned like unto Him. The body passes away with the passage of a few fleeting years. Therefore, when two souls marry, the ceremony is more far reaching and vital than when a preacher pronounces them man and wife. Can the preacher's saying "I pronounce you man and wife" make the woman you love any more the soul of your soul? A number of things might break the legal ceremony, but the ceremony of the soul is eternal. Those whom God hath joined together man cannot put asunder. But in the very nature of the case the legal ceremony is not to be minimized. It plays its part; likewise the soul. They are comple-

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mentary. Neither can live without the other. A mere legal marriage is a travesty, a miserable mockery; a mere soul union is a transgression of human and divine law, and invites alike the disapproval of man and the wrath of God. This being the case, an engagement becomes in a sense as sacred as a marriage. This fact needs to be stressed in these times of broken betrothals and lightly contracted engagements. In society today an engagement with many young men and women means no more than a promise to go joy riding next week. This does very well among birds of a feather, men and women whose souls are so shrunk by the contracting influences of modern society life that they are no longer capable of a grand passion. But when one of these burnt out, warped, twisted hybrids comes into contact with a man or a woman whose heart is potential and whose soul is capable of rare sweeps of love, then a lightly contracted and an equally lightly broken engagement becomes a grave thing. Indeed, there is such a possibility as a broken heart with a broken engagement — and a broken heart is no spectacle to call forth laughter but rather a sight to weep over. Some young people pride themselves upon the number of hearts they can break. (God have mercy upon their souls!) But a broken heart means a broken spirit, and

a broken spirit means a withered life, and a withered life means a lost life, therefore the heart breaker in a sense becomes a grim, vicious, heinous reality, a hellish instrument in the hands of an irresponsible, inflated, small-souled, hard-hearted, canary-brained being, causing clouded vision, sleepless nights, dreary days, and exquisite pain. When people plight their troth each to other, they should regard the promise the most serious and sacred of all the promises of life, unless it be a foolish or a wrong promise, and their loyalty to each other should be as true and as binding as if they were indeed and in truth husband and wife. They should naturally prefer their society to that of others, and it is indeed a passing strange type of man or woman who craves the society of other women and other men after they become engaged, and not only are loath to give up old *friends* but are not happy unless they can keep them dangling until the wedding day is actually in sight. This is a phenomenon of human nature which resolves itself into an enigma and refuses to be analyzed by the normal, average mind of mortal man. How can our homes be great centers of character building and soul culture when so many of them are built upon such flimsy, slight, sandy, mushy foundations? As soon expect grapes to grow from thorns and figs from this-

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bles, the Ethiopian to change his color and the leopard his spots, as to expect great results from such sorry beginnings.

The wedding day should be the greenest memory in after life. Around it should cluster the tenderest, the most sacred associations and memories. There is nothing to be afraid of if there is perfect love, perfect trust, and perfect faith — and if these elements are lacking there had better be no wedding day until they are forthcoming, for single misery is preferable to double torment. The wedding ceremony is a sacred thing, and the arrangements for the occasion should be in keeping therewith. Simplicity of taste and simplicity of performance should be the dominant note. This does not mean that handsome clothes and even a complex array of attendants should be debarred, but it does mean that a gaudy, showy, thrilling, unnecessarily expensive, and tasteless wedding is a sacrilege and a sin, and the contractors are selling their birthrights for a mess of pottage by converting the most sacred occasion of their lives into a free-for-all show to win the applause of a wondering, jealous, envious, delighted gathering of onlookers who would go and straightway do likewise — if they could afford it.

When two people have loved, won, and married each other, there is a temptation to rest

on their oars, to let up in their efforts to please, to hold each other's love. It is so natural to think they "have got" each other. The preacher pronounced them man and wife, therefore there is no danger of either losing the other. But this is false reasoning and a grave mistake. Nearly any two people can hold each other's love — and each other — several times a week in a parlor, dressed in good clothes and a planet's distance away from the work and worries and cares and common-place affairs of life. When they see each other the circumstances are ideal, the environment propitious, and the halo of romance and perchance the mystery and the poetry of night are wrapped about them as a rare, beautiful garment. There is nothing to do but love. But wait until after the wedding when real life greets you, when the eternal commonplace speaks to you persistently, when the mystery and the poetry of night resolve themselves into the common open-eyed day with its round of prosaic duties and its seeming lack of poetry and star shine and star dust. If you are not very careful and if you are not abidingly in love with the *soul* of your husband, when you look at your husband at table three times a day he may seem just an ordinary, every day human being instead of the dream-like angelic being you idealized him to be in the days and nights called halcyon. And if your

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love is founded upon anything less than the soul, you may wake up to find that your wife is only a woman with a woman's faults and failures and not the exquisitely fashioned creature (the pattern of whom is forever lost) you idealized her to be. While the temptation to lapse after marriage is great, the real reasons for being more watchful and more continually attractive in the eyes of each other are greater than before marriage. Your wife may not leave you — it is highly probable she will not, especially if there are children — but you can lose the love of her heart and you can lose the loyalty and allegiance of her soul — and what do you want with a woman whose heart does not thrill with an abiding love for you and whose soul is not stirred and fired by a great passion for you?

Most people who are happily married are apt to think others are likewise happily married, and *vice versa*. But in reality there are too few ideal homes. How many homes have you *known* that were characterized by perfect love, perfect congeniality, perfect harmony, perfect understanding, and perfect happiness? Of course, everybody is lovely and harmonious and wreathed in smiles when you pay a short visit to a home, but that is not *knowing* the character and the complexion of a home. The real home is the life that is lived day after day

and night after night when there is no strange eye to look on and no visitor for whom appearances must be kept up. Perfect love, congeniality, harmony, understanding, and happiness are far too rare in the real home, not the home life that is presented to the casual visitor. But God evidently meant homes to be happy and successful, else He had not launched them. There are certain fixed laws governing happiness and success in marriage, even as there are fixed laws governing the movements of stars and ocean tides, and ideal marriages are conditioned upon the observance and the practice of certain requirements even as growing crops and flowers are conditioned upon sunshine and rain. These will be stated and elaborated in the following chapters.

V

A HAPPY MARRIAGE: SOME ESSENTIALS

1. As already remarked, *love* is an absolute necessity for an ideal relationship between husband and wife. A home without love is as a ship without a rudder, Niagara without the Great Lakes, a rainbow without the influence of the sun. As well try to strike divine music from a harp out of tune as to try to establish a great marital relationship without a great love. The greatest artist could not make music on a banjo that would stir the soul in such fashion that time and place would be forgotten in a sort of divine ecstasy of delight, neither can two people, tho individually strong in character and grand in soul, project a beautiful, ideal home life without the pregnant foundation of love. Love is the fulfilling of marriage. Love is life and life is love, and nowhere is this truer than in the home. Love is a miracle. It does not behave itself in conformity to any natural law. It is supernatural. It transcends and comprehends all law. Love is the fulfilling of the law. It is as old as the human

heart and as young as the last wedding a moment since. Strange, passing strange, is the mystery that engages our attention whenever two people separated by space and material realities, often never laying eyes on each other until the light that never was on sea or land breaks in on their souls, are suddenly as the lighting flashes — or gradually — as the day dawns — swept away from old moorings by the tides of a great and resistless love, giving all in the prodigality of a beautiful *abandon* of soul and demanding all in a sort of divinely inconsistent larger selfishness. The man is now moved by a passion stronger than life and greater than death. The old order of things passes away and the new passion takes possession, resolving all thoughts, all activities, and all conduct into the likeness of itself. What was once hard now becomes easy; what was foolishness is now rarest wisdom; what was most worth while after which to strive seems not so important after all. He is not only willing, but ready to make any sacrifice and he doesn't even call it sacrifice, but rather a rare privilege. Life is painted in new colors, more radiantly beautiful and richly hued than he had dreamed of in his wildest flights of imagination. Nothing is worth while, nothing counts, unless he can win the heart of the woman he loves. And the woman — she is not only willing and ready

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to leave home, pleasures, parents, her all, and follow him anywhere, everywhere, but she suffers a quenchless thirst until she is privileged to make the great surrender for the infinitely greater reward, the mystic reward of love. Stirred by this divine passion, fired by these splendid motives, and swept by this tide of elemental, primal love-consciousness, they become one in soul, one in purpose, one in life. And without this, there cannot be largest success, purest happiness, and richest home life.

2. Next to love, as an essential to wedded happiness comes *congeniality*, congeniality of temperament, tastes, ideals, purposes, and character. Incompatibility of nature and interests are hot beds for the growth of all sorts of noxious weeds which choke and stifle growth in wedded harmony and success. A materialistic, commercialistic, of-the-earth-earthy man marries a rare, radiant spirited, highly poetic, delicately constructed and exquisitely refined woman. By some strange freak and idiosyncrasy of love and by the response of a superficial chord or so, they love each other, or think they do. But their lives were projected along entirely different lines and their tastes, temperament, dreams, purposes, and conception of relative values are vitally different in their general make up. The result is continuous clash and jar and discord that mar the harmony of

the relationship, which means no abiding happiness. Her ways are not his ways and his ways are not her ways. If she tries to conform to his standards, conceptions, tastes, ideals, she becomes an actress, a false entity, not herself nor yet another, and furthermore she must needs sacrifice her ideals, her dreams, and even her principles, and submerge herself wholly into his life. But the cost is too great. The reward is not sufficient. That sort of business is highly in order in our relationship with the Master, because in losing our life we gain a larger, richer, fuller life, infinitely more valuable and more beautiful than the old life, but not so with a mere man of-the-earth-earthy in order to establish a more congenial and more perfect bond of fellowship. In such a case the only possible solution is constant striving of the man to identify himself with the several segments in the circle of his wife's tastes, life, dreams, and purposes, and finally to attain unto the point where he becomes harmonized with the entire circle and therefore in perfect accord with his wife. Under such circumstances, she becomes to him an angel with healing in her wings and his love for her has transformed him into a higher order of creation. But this is so rare that it is exceedingly perilous for the above type of woman to rush into a hasty marriage with the above type of man in the face of such

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tremendous odds without testing his love and loyalty and potentiality by every known test. Even when people are equally strong in character and grand in soul, it is a strain on love to overrule and overcome all minor incompatibilities of temperament and uncongeniality of tastes, but when the fundamentals also are at variance, then love is strained to snapping and cosmos becomes chaos. In the marriage relationship more than anywhere else congeniality is at a premium, and congenial married people are thrice blessed, for the whole tenor of life is vitally affected, and there is an added zest and relish over the folks who are not naturally congenial.

3. After congeniality comes *confidence or trust*, without which there can be no abiding happiness in marriage. Faith props the world up on its shoulders. The business world could not operate without confidence; friendship could not exist without faith; the smallest details of everyday life are conditioned upon trust. How much more so the relationship of all others the most intimate, the most dependent upon the highest qualities. If there is not perfect faith on both sides, there cannot be lasting happiness, for married people must trust each other. There must be no secrets. The door of either heart must be kept ajar. There must be perfect confidence and a mutual exchange

of thoughts, interests, incidents, and purposes. A man sins against his wife when he refuses to let her into his business life, and in fact, into anything that touches his life even remotely; and a woman should conceal nothing from her husband. The birthright of love accords to them this privilege. And the woman who thoughtlessly tells to outsiders the business, professional, or private secrets revealed to her by her husband in the sacred name and under the divine protection of love is monumentally stupid, colossally silly, and stupendously lacking in the elements of sense, tact, and judgment. In many instances the apparent reprehensible lack of communicativeness on the part of husbands is due to a certain rare display of un wisdom on the part of wives in publishing upon house tops secrets that have been whispered to them in bedrooms. But often times men fail to talk of their business affairs to their wives because they erroneously imagine they are not interested in such things or perchance they are lacking in business acumen. Could they shuffle off the masculine coil of egotism and condescend to ask advice of their wives, they would often find that their business would prosper more under the direction of two than single handed. The conceit of some men is monstrous; their ways past finding out.

In order to establish the highest bond of

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faith and fellowship, it is absolutely necessary for husband and wife to deal frankly and candidly with each other. There should be crystalline honor, guileless confidence, and large-hearted lack of suspicion. As soon as one of the contracting parties is so thoughtless and criminal as to deceive the other, then a gulf is fixed, barriers are set up, and the foundations of love, which are always out of sight, are being shaken and eaten away. It is not even necessary for the other party to know of the deception, it is only necessary to deceive — the results are certain. It is a sin against love, a crime against marriage, a slur on the soul of our soul, and the reflex influence on our soul and our own love is what pinches most. After all, it is more important to love than to be loved, more blessed to give than to receive, and when we deceive the one who loves us, we damage our own soul and blight our own love through the subtle but powerful law of reflex action.

People have no business marrying unless they mean to trust each other implicitly and tell each other everything, for if they do not, it simply means a glaring lack of faith, and if faith is lacking, it were better had they never married, for faith is the evidence of things not seen in the married as well as in the spiritual life.

VI

A HAPPY MARRIAGE: MORE ESSENTIALS

4. The next essential to an ideal relationship is *unselfishness*. This is a divine gift. There is nothing more beautiful in the whole sweep of Christian graces, and unselfishness is a Christian grace. A self centered, selfish person has no business marrying, for in the very nature of the case marriage means a projection of one life into another, an emptying of self into another self, a surrender of selfish rights and liberties for greater rights and fuller liberty. The selfish minds can form no concept of marriage. They are not permitted even to stand on the outer edges and catch a glimpse of its rare joys and its rich luxuries. At best their idea of the most beautiful relationship on earth is sordid, materialistic, sensuous. "Give and it shall be given unto you" is abundantly true in this mystic relationship. The more people give each other, the more their married life will mean to them. We get out of it what we put into it; no more, no less. Young people are often heard wishing for such a husband or such a wife as

some friend is so fortunate as to possess, who lavishes a great love, bestows rare gifts, thinks in terms of tender acts, and is ever kind and thoughtful and considerate, but it seems never to occur to them to render divine gifts out of their own lives and to arrive at conjugal bliss by enjoying the reflex influence of such godlike gifts. The typical modern girl seems to be cursed with the exaggerated notion that some plumed knight owes her an ideal existence in a beautiful home, while she, strangely fortunate creature, owes no man such happiness. And the typical modern young man busies himself too much asking what will be given him by the woman he marries, instead of ransacking his heart and soul to see if there are any gifts beautiful enough for the woman who consents to place her life in his keeping.

When selfish people marry, they take care of themselves in a measure by looking after the interests of number one, but the pity of it is that a selfish animal so often marries a beautiful-souled, unselfish, divinely fashioned opposite, and there is the inevitable discord and the result of sickness of heart. Our joy is never so full as when we give in love to beloved objects, therefore, the sane, practical, and sensible thing as well as the poetic, idyllic, and idealistic, is for married people to project themselves heart and soul into each other's lives, giving all and

demanding nothing, receiving in turn a large measure of happiness. The very nature of love is to show forth a rare quality of unselfishness, and in a sense there is no such thing as love where there is unselfishness.

“Love took up the harp of life and smote on
all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of self, which, trembling,
passed in music out of sight.”

Love is not happy unless it is permitted constantly to lavish itself upon the object loved. Therefore, if even a semblance of love is to exist selfishness must be dethroned and self must abdicate, for it is only as we abandon self and launch out into the deep of our larger self that we can attain unto wedded joy that is full and success that is not measured.

5. Next to unselfishness is *tangible expression and demonstration of abstract affection*. Under this head would be included affectionateness, tenderness, consideration, gentleness, thoughtfulness. It is not enough to know that the person that we sit opposite to at the table three times a day loves us with a quenchless, abiding love; it is not enough to have heard a generous expression of such love once, twice or ten times; we want to hear the old, old story over and over and over. We listen eagerly for the ever new *I love you*, and look intently for the tender glow in

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the eye of love. Men especially should speak frequent words and show manifold signs of affection to their wives, for several good reasons:

1. Women are creatures of love. They are dependent upon love. With man love is a thing apart; it is woman's whole existence. She was designed for love and home. She may attain unto loftiest heights of fame and worldly success, and she may win the merited applause of an admiring and appreciative world, because she has taken her seat in the gallery of the world's illustrious sons and daughters, but she is never satisfied in heart and soul, and her largest success is not realized, until a great love stirs her soul and a worthy object in turn fills and thrills her life with affectionate expressions and tender acts of an equally great love. This being true, if a man really desires to render the woman he loves happy, he must needs speak to her often, very often, in words of tender, sincere affection, and by his conduct translate such words into terms of practical expression.

2. Men are prone to neglect this function. For this reason they should zealously guard against it. Many women are unhappy in heart and in soul because of the proneness of men to neglect to express their love. If men really knew this, the chances are that there would be fewer hungry hearts. But men misplace emphasis. They stress big things, practical

things, what they call sensible things, and not the little nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love that really count for more in the happiness of women than all that money, all that fame, can ever bestow. Many men imagine they have been expressive and demonstrative quite enough if they give their wives the necessities and some of the luxuries of life. They fail to realize that it is not what they have or can do or can give them that women desire, but rather themselves, their hearts and souls, their frequent expressions of love and practical, tender demonstration of the same. (Let it be remembered that the women spoken of in this connection are real, genuine, great women, and not grasping, greedy, sordid creatures, who think they have gained a notable victory when they squeeze and coax a handsome dress or a swell hat out of their reluctant husbands. They have their reward when they get their dress and hat. May the Lord have mercy upon their souls!)

3. By use and exercise talents are developed. Love is a talent, a God-given talent. The practice of love is a noble profession. Love can be educated, developed, perfected, even as other talents, and it is worth developing and perfecting. What the current is to the electric light, the unseen force to the elevator, love is to the operation and movements of the home — then

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why not perfect love, why not use a God-given talent in order to enjoy a larger and richer talent, in order to render the person of all others the dearest on earth supremely happy and in order to be rendered resultantly happy?

Love between man and wife should continually translate itself into beautiful thoughts of consideration, beautiful acts of tenderness, and beautiful forms of gentleness. There is no necessity for humiliating quarrels and harsh language between people who love enough and who are properly mated. Such things do not happen on the heights. The skies up there are clear. And it is possible to live on the heights of love, above bickerings and strife and discordant clashes. After all, the serene, beautiful fellowship of two souls is to be coveted above the price of material considerations, and if we give ourselves pause to consider, we shall all conclude that most of the ignominious quarrels and ignoble clashes in marriage directly or indirectly grow out of some pusillanimous, irrelevant, materialistic consideration that should not be allowed to disturb the half wakeful slumber of a watchful chancleer. How many hungry hearts are pining for a touch of tenderness, a stroke of gentleness, an act of thoughtful love-inspired consideration, from men who were all smiles, all tenderness, all gentleness, and all thoughtful consideration in the days that were

halcyon — before the marriage ceremony! If every husband who has been rough, complaining, harsh, thoughtless, and inconsiderate, would for one month be affectionate, kind, tender, thoughtful, and considerate, the desert in multitudes of homes would blossom as the rose, the bloom of immortal youth would return to faded cheeks, and a song of infinite happiness would sing itself in the hearts of hungry women, unmatched for melody in the harmonies of the world.

VII

A HAPPY MARRIAGE: STILL MORE ESSENTIALS

Sympathy and *understanding* are powerful aids to ideal wedded life. By this is meant not only sympathy and understanding in the commonly accepted sense, but in a deeper, more far reaching sense. Sympathy is a divine thing and understanding is an essential thing. Sympathy finds expression in rejoicing with them that do rejoice and weeping with them that weep. In the more intimate relationship between husband and wife it consists in entering fully, freely, and heartily into each other's joys, sorrows, aspirations, purposes, cares, fancies, work, play, and everything that directly or indirectly touches the thought or life of either. All of us need sympathy. Some cannot live without it. It tides us over many inevitably rough places, lightens our sorrows, increases our joys, and restores our souls. We do not *ask* for sympathy; it must come unsought in order to be efficacious. Too much that passes under that sweet name is mere lip-exercise and cant and hollow mockery. Sympathy has one source

— the heart. If one has no heart, one cannot sympathize with another, in joy or in sorrow, for it requires more heart power to rejoice with the rejoicing than to weep with those who weep. Indeed, it is a test of real goodness. Even from those outside the charmed circle of home we crave sympathy, but it comes to us charged with much greater force and comfort when those we love most tear a leaf out of their hearts and pass it on to us. And sweetest of all sympathy is that which comes from the one woman or the one man. If married people fail to render each to the other due sympathy in every thought and act of life, then the relationship cannot be complete in its fulness and rare in its richness. It adds zest and relish to life to enjoy the approbation of those nearest to us. Even in such an apparently small thing as clothes, a woman is rendered happier or less happy as her husband approves or disapproves of her taste and selections. And naturally so. We love to please those we love. Then those we love most we love to please most. Therefore, what the best loved thinks of what we wear, do, say, and dream, affects us vitally. More sympathy is needed in the home. Many an unleavened lump would be leavened by its gracious influence and oftentimes cosmos would reign where only chaos exists.

We have said that understanding is an essen-

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tial. It is closely allied to sympathy, and in a sense there can be no understanding unless there is sympathetic understanding. When a kindred spirit discovers its soulmate and soul calls unto soul and there is an answering of souls through the agency of a beautiful understanding, then the mystic bond of fellowship welds them fast, and understanding becomes a very strong link in the golden chain of love, an indispensable link. The majority of warped, twisted relationships grow out of misunderstandings. At first there is a slight lack of sympathetic understanding, which creates a small gulf and builds a little barrier. Then another misunderstanding arises, and the gulf is widened, the barrier is enlarged — and then another, and another, until the gulf is impassably wide and the barrier is insurmountably high, and two hearts that beat as one are severed and two souls that held high fellowship on the clear heights of love are torn asunder. But the daily, hourly presence of a gracious sympathetic understanding would have averted such a catastrophe. Ignorance is vicious and criminal; understanding is knowledge; knowledge is essential to largest success in any realm of life. A lack of understanding, then, is a paucity of knowledge, which is always attended with danger.

Renunciation, sacrifice, abandonment.

One of the most profound and farseeing state-

ments ever spoken or written is found in those seemingly paradoxical words of Christ: "He that loseth his life shall find it." In a spiritual sense this means that the way of progress is through abandonment, the way of life through the portal of death, the way of victory through defeat. That is, the cords that bind us to the old, the natural, the carnal life must be snapped and the tendrils that bind us to the new, the spiritual, the Christ life will be proportionately tightened. This is a very potent and at the same time a most beautiful truth, one that causes some to stumble and leads others into a larger, richer, and fuller life. In somewhat the same sense this law, this great truth, holds good in the conjugal relationship, for marriage is indeed a renunciation, a sacrifice, an abandonment of many things, and this is not merely the case once for all at the ceremony, but it is continuous. In addition to leaving home and parents, surroundings, girlhood pleasures, and renouncing all to follow her husband whithersoever he leads her, a woman is called upon continually to submerge her life in the life of her husband, to share his adversity as well as his good fortune. And the man is called upon to support and protect and care for his wife, whom he has promised to love, cherish and cling to, even though such action interrupts his best laid plans, breaks his most cherished dreams,

and smashes his finest air castles of material conquest (I say *material*, for no great love and marriage ever interfered with any spiritual conquest, even tho it may sometimes interfere with material conquests or intellectual acquirements). But these are the big sacrifices, the lamp light renunciations, the grand stand strokes in abandonment. And they really look larger, but in reality, as in all life, the greatest things are the unseen things, and so here men and women are called upon to sacrifice most where the world sees least and to give up most in the every day, prosaic life of the home. A man, for instance, is fond of the society of his fellowmen. He also has a passion for secret orders of one kind and another. He experiences great delight in going out at nights for a harmless round with the men or for a visit to a much-loved lodge or club or order. It is perfectly all right for him to go *per se*, but hold a moment: has he a wife? Are there little children, or big ones? What has his wife been doing all day? It may be that she is more tired and weary than he. He has been out in the great, busy, whirling world; she confined closely in the home with a thousand grinding cares and nerve racking duties. Shall he go out and leave her to battle with the children and continue to eke out one shut in, lonely day after another? Shall he go off and enjoy himself, while the

woman he solemnly promised to love and cherish and render happy is at home weary in body and broken in spirit and sick at heart? To be sure it might cost him something to stay away from the society of his fellowmen and from the various orders he has joined and help his wife with *his* children as well as hers, but does it not cost her infinitely more? Who is he that he should feed on the fat of the land and be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease, while his poor, tired, weary, hungry-hearted, broken-spirited wife spends her life energies raising children and keeping house and mending clothes and entertaining company and doing a thousand other things for her high and mighty lord and master, for whom he seems to think such a life is a very great honor and even a high privilege? Men of this stripe have no more business with wives than a guinea pig has with a silk cravat.

A woman may be literary, or she may be possessed of a positive dislike for the daily round of home duties, or perchance she may be filled with a consuming passion for the society of other women and for women's clubs, etc., etc. She finds children a bore and her husband a nuisance, when she is called upon to make any sacrifices for him or for his comfort and pleasure. She would so much rather read a book or go to a club or *go out* — somewhere, *anywhere*. Such a woman may listen enraptured to eloquent ser-

mons on service or beautiful discourses on self-sacrifice or moving appeals for missionary endeavor, and very likely she will think she is making great sacrifices and rendering beautiful service when she straightway offers to join herself to various church committees and bestir herself mightily in behalf of others' orphan children and heathen husbands, to the neglect of her own unsaved husband — unsaved because her pernicious over activity in church work at the expense of home duties has rendered him bitter against the Church and religion in general. But as a matter of fact, her sacrifices should be directed towards her husband and children and she should find her largest life by first losing her life for her home. These two examples of many others that might be given suggest the necessity of renunciation as a condition of home happiness.

Religion. By placing religion last, I do not mean to imply that its influence is least in binding together in harmonious fashion man and wife. As a matter of fact, it is neither first nor yet last; it is everything and comprehends all else that has been said. This does not mean that there can be no happiness in homes where there is no religion, for such a statement would be absurd, but it means that there can be nothing but happiness where there is genuine religion on both sides. In other words, some homes may

enjoy happiness without religion, but no home can experience unhappiness with religion — and all homes are rendered happy by religion. This may seem an extravagant statement at first sight — the utterance of an over-zealous advocate rather than the statement of a calm seeker after truth. Suppose we examine for a moment the real nature of the case, using the proposition that religion comprehends all else and insures conjugal harmony and happiness. When two people are possessed of a vital, living, transforming type of religion or Christianity, and the kingdom of heaven is so overwhelmingly established in their hearts that they are in fashion like their Lord, loving the things He loves and hating the things He hates and emulating in every possible way His matchless example, they have attained unto that blessed state of mind, heart, and conduct where love is the watch word of their life; a beautiful bond of congeniality is established because of the gracious community of interests; perfect faith, trust, and confidence characterize their dealings one with the other; unselfishness flourishes as the green bay tree; tenderness and affection and gentleness find a ready and receptive soil; sympathetic understanding abides uninterrupted; and no sacrifice, no renunciation, will be lacking, for these are the very languages that are spoken by religion, the steps it takes in its journey to the celestial

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city. Therefore, furnishing, as it does, the very essence of the ingredients and conditions necessary to marital success and happiness, religion lays claim to being the one, never failing solution of the all important question. It is hard to convince most people of this fact, and especially some religious folk, and that for the reason that they have less religion than many who make no professions or pretensions. But it is religiosity and piosity rather than religion. Outward show of religion without the inner reality and experience will do more to cause a disturbance of any sort on earth than a total lack of it. And there is always a weak link in the chain, a skeleton in the closet, of those who have failed with religion as an aid. It was not the real thing, or there was not a complete surrender, or there were conflicting desires, or the claims of the world and the flesh and the wiles of the devil were too strong — something was wrong. God is not limited except as He limits Himself. Some good people think if they have a well seasoned case of religion, it suffices, regardless of the faith and conduct of their husbands or wives, but this is false doctrine, for a clash is more likely than ever and a diversity of spirits tends to create friction. Our claim is that both must be unfeigned Christians — then the problem is solved. And I challenge the citation of a single failure. It does not even take

the exception to prove the rule in this case. Nothing so sanctifies the homes of any land as the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. The young preacher who allows himself to marry an irreligious woman presents himself as one who sleeps. The young woman who submerges her life completely into the life of an avowedly irreligious man assumes a grave responsibility. The parents who undertake to make a home and rear a family without the aid of a kind Father are sublimely ignorant of the relative values of life. The home problem is the greatest of all the problems that vex the mind of man — and this great problem will be solved only as men and women accord to the Master the hospitality of their homes.

VIII

FATHERHOOD

Parenthood is a rare and sacred privilege, a gift from God to be used as faithful stewards, rendering back to Him the gracious gift with an hundred fold increase. Nothing so stirs the latent, dormant possibilities in men and women as this greatest of trusts. How often do we see a young, reckless, wayward, irresponsible man suddenly sobered and transformed in thought, words, and conduct by the advent of a little child in the home! And how suddenly, how miraculously, does the gay, giddy, thoughtless, pleasure-loving girl pass over into the glorious realm of womanhood by the sacred way of motherhood! The new responsibility, the heretofore unrealized joys, the world-old appeal change the form and the complexion of things and henceforth life's relative values and manifold messages are interpreted in terms of childhood. That marvelous law of possession is brought to play in its most subtle and powerful form. When a man says to another, "This is *my* dog, *my* horse, *my* house," the law of possession is at work in no uncertain fashion, but when

he says, "this is *my* child," the elemental principles of the mystic operations of the law of possession are at high tide. It means something to be a parent. God is a parent, our Father. Man exercises an office of God when he becomes a parent. And the responsibility is in direct proportion to the honor, the privilege, the pleasure. There is no responsibility on earth so great as that of a parent. A king's power is awful, and his responsibility in proportion; the president of our country labors under grave responsibility; the law makers of the land are charged with a heavy trust; a jury deliberating over a murder case with the shadow of the gallows in sight carries a fearful load of responsibility; and a general leading thousands of men into the jaws of death is confronted by duties and responsibilities that are indeed grave: but greater than any or all of these is the responsibility attached to the moulding and shaping of a little child. The potter has no greater power over the soft clay than the parent over this undeveloped lump of possibilities for good or for evil. Who is equal to the task? The load of responsibility is enough to crush any parent who thinks seriously over life's problems, were it not for a merciful God who partially draws a curtain over the responsibilities and grants grace enough to meet each new problem — when parents trust Him.

We shall consider first the father in the home, because he is head of the home, or should be. This does not mean that he is head in an obnoxious sense nor yet does it mean that his is the privilege of domineering over his wife and children. On the contrary a domineering father is a monstrosity, an inharmonious combination of repellent elements, having no higher conception of parenthood than a beast of the field, a bird of the air, or a fish of the sea. But the father is head of the home in a very real sense, and in love and gentleness, and also in firmness, it is not only his privilege but his duty to exercise this office. The father who is not head of his home is as pitiable as the domineering father is despicable, and his weakness becomes viciousness — so far as results are concerned. The woman who is not willing and anxious for the man to be head of the home is strangely lacking in one of the most essential elements. In fact, she has missed her calling; she should have been a man. God meant every father to be a priest. By this is meant his religious function in the family. He is divinely expected to minister to his family in spiritual as well as in temporal things and to dispense the bread of life as well as provide nourishment for the body. It therefore becomes his duty to erect a family altar in his home, to dedicate himself and his family to the service of God, to intercede with God for his

family, to carry the burden of each child on his heart to the throne of grace, to be a pastor to his children, and to exercise himself to the utmost in right living, right acting, and right working, to the intent that they may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, thoroughly furnished unto all good works and right living. Of course, this refers to the Christian fathers. The man of the world, the non-confessor of Christ, would also find help in the solution of home problems along such lines. But even if all Christian men would perform the religious duties that they so unmistakably owe to their family, the kingdom of heaven on earth would move with wonderfully increased rapidity.

In these modern days of din and noise, glare and glitter, tumult and shouting, rushing and bustling, the family altar has been ruthlessly relegated to a back seat. Some men are too busy making money to thank the most High for His bounties; some too indifferent to their priestly functions; some, too luke warm in their religious zeal, some too timid and bashful to hold family prayer before their families; and some too stifled by the subtle, insinuating, serpent like influences of the world; and then the devil is especially active right at this point because he has more sense than the above indicated Christians, realizing that this is a most powerful way to promote the kingdom of God on earth

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and to develop stalwart, virile manhood and lofty womanhood, and realizing further that the elimination of millions of priests in millions of homes is far more destructive work than the weeding out of thousands of preachers in the pulpits. Furthermore, the character of the ministry is shaped and colored largely by the character of the individual homes, for does not the ministry enjoy its earliest, and therefore, most important, training in the homes? And what influences are powerful enough to eradicate the training and impressions of early youth?

The kingdom of God on earth would encircle the globe and leaven the nations and transfigure human nature in one half the time if it could begin a grand forward march on its knees in a million Christian homes around a million family altars. And this is only what is due to God, to each family, and to the world by all professing Christians. "Will a man rob God?" Yes, he will. Will a Christian rob God? Yes. Will a man rob his family, his children? Yes. Will a Christian man rob his children, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh? Yes, he will. All honest men are not honest then? No, many honest men, many Christian gentlemen are dishonest, dishonest before God and before their families. No man is completely and entirely honest until he pays all of his debts and all of his vows to God as well as to man. More fa-

thers fall down at this point than at any other in their relation to their children. World conventions to promote missionary activity are very necessary and highly in order; great conferences to inspire laymen to higher and grander reaches are admirable; and magnificent gatherings in the name of Jesus for the spread of His gospel are inspiring: but these mighty works will never enjoy their richest results until the individual homes that lie back of them are homes of prayer and Christian culture.

The average father fails to realize the vastness of his influence in his home. He does not comprehend fully the power of a good and great life *silently* and *quietly* lived among his children — not only on Sunday in sanctimonious fashion, but day after day and night after night, week after week and month after month and year after year. One of the saddest things I know is the disillusionment of children in the all-goodness and all-greatness of their fathers. Why, bless your life, man, don't you know that your little boy thinks you are just the best man in the whole world? And don't you know that your little girl, when she circles your neck with her tender, white little arms, believes that there is no other man quite so good and quite so wonderful as her father? The trust of a little child in his father is one of the most beautiful, one of the most touching, one of the most inspiring

sights on earth. I read of a little boy who missed his father from the house, and knowing that he often went out to the barn, the little fellow started out in the snow to find his father. The snow was deep and he did not see his father, but was perfectly content to follow in the steps of his father through the snow. It is recorded that the father, looking back and seeing his little boy following in his steps in such trustful fashion, was overwhelmed with the seriousness of his responsibility, the power of his example, and the imperfection of his life, and resolved from that day to live such a life and be such a man that he would be willing for his son to be like him and follow in his steps. Are you willing for your children to be the man, to live the life, that you are living? This thought should give us pause, for it is food for thought.

Too many fathers refuse to do their part in the training of their children. They leave that to their wives. *They* are occupied with more important, larger duties and responsibilities. But what is it? Is any thing more important than the shaping and the molding of a pliable, potential, flexible human soul into the stature of a strong man or a great woman? This glaring omission resolves itself into a question of laziness, indifference, a sense of unworthiness, or triflingness in general. Do not the children belong to you as well as to your wife? Why should

she bear the burden and carry the load alone? She needs a strong arm to help her lift it. She needs co-operation and sympathy and moral backing. Some fathers go so far as to hinder their wives in their efforts to train aright their children by taking the side of the child against the mother when she would justly and wisely administer discipline. He resolves himself into an undesirable citizen, because good citizenship begins in the home.

The ideal father is a priest in his home. He holds family prayer. He dedicates his children to God at an early age. He is careful of his Christian life. He thinks seriously of his silent example. He co-operates with his wife in the actual training of his children. He works hard, and if necessary, wears patched clothes, in order that his children may enjoy a college education. He is the friend of his boys, the friend of his girls. He is no tyrant. He is a four-square man unashamed for his boys to be like him when they become men. May God give us grace and wisdom to be the fathers He would have us be!

IX

MOTHERHOOD

A man's idea of the word **MOTHER** is colored by his relationship to his own mother. The word loses its peculiar sacredness if one is so unfortunate as to have an undesirable mother. A great mother is the finest legacy, the best fortune possible, to the children of men. A delinquent father does not necessarily mean delinquent children. Not so with the mother. In a peculiar way she molds the character and shapes the destiny of her children. She suffers with them and for them. She cares for them and bears with them. She lives with them and too often dies with them. Hers is the watchful eye; hers the sympathetic touch. Hers is the load of care; hers the midnight vigils. Out of her heart are poured her richest treasures of highest and holiest womanhood. Her children love her because she first loved them. She knows no music so sweet as baby feet making melody in her heart. She knows no voice so beautiful as the broken words of her little children. In the life of her children she finds her largest life; the success of her children is the fruition of her

finest dreams. For them she will delve and for them she will toil; for them she will live and for them she will die. She is the finest concrete illustration of the heart life to be found on earth. No other love is like unto the love of a great mother; no other influence so great. How soft were her hands when she stroked away the pain from our wasted bodies — so often more efficacious than the costliest drugs! How sweet was her voice when with baby lullabies at the close of the day she sang us to sleep! How beautiful were her feet when at midnight we heard her softly approach our sick bed to watch with us until the long, long night was gone — so *long* and so *dark*! How ample was her breast when tired and sleepy after the long day's play, we curled up and were rocked into slumberland! She is growing old now. There are wrinkles on her brow and her step is not so light. Her hair is gray and her form is bent — and sometimes her hands tremble and even her voice is different. In the service of her children she has worn herself out. As she stands upon the western porch of life, the halo of the living God is gathered about her form. No soldier on field of battle, no statesman in halls of State, no mariner on chartless seas can claim a richer meed of praise, a larger share of honor. She is greater than the greatest sculptor, because out of a bundle of possibilities she carves an angel

form. She is greater than the greatest painter, because on the canvas of the souls of her children she paints pictures which shall live forever and forever. She is greater than the greatest poet, because in the hearts of her children she writes poetry and sings songs which help to swell the anthems of the angel choir of God. She loses her life in high and holy fashion for her children and finds a rarer, richer life because she gives her all.

This is the *true* mother, the *real* mother, the *great* mother. Were all mothers like her, the millennium would be upon us, for, verily, the mothers of the world would leaven the world. But unfortunately there are a great many so called mothers who are not really worthy the sacred name. They fail to measure up to the vast responsibility. They do not catch a vision of their function and high mission. They see the routine, the drudgery, the sacrifices, the unpleasantness; they refuse to fasten their eyes upon the glory, the privilege, the beauty of motherhood. They are not willing to pay the price, to live the life, to do the deeds. There are too many restrictions, too many exacting duties, too much swallowing of self. The easy-going, pleasure-loving, worldly-minded woman finds herself in the wrong pew with several children to love and train and empty self for. True she has a certain animal instinct which

might be called *love* by the thoughtless, but in reality her capacity for the love and joys and service and sacrifice of motherhood is as the capacity of a pint measure for a gallon of water. She lives and moves and has her being outside of the sacred and wonderful realm of motherhood.

Some mothers care more for automobiles, and fine clothes, and clubs, and little dogs, and high society than they care for the bodies and minds and hearts and souls of their children. They are the sordid of soul. They cannot determine the relative values of life. They are attracted by things external, show, paraphernalia. They are *vulgar* women, not in the ordinary sense of the word, but really in a worse sense. To them a bank note has a definite soul value. To them a joy ride is sweeter than the lisp of a little child. To them a little dog and a little child are two little things. They profane the name of mother. They rob life of much of its fragrance and zest and relish. They compromise the high things of the spirit for the low things of the flesh, and a little child shall not lead them. These women should have refrained steadfastly from matrimony. But the pity of it is, that good men so often are attracted by this kind of woman and leave the really great women to marry any old thing or wisely to remain unclaimed blessings.

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Some mothers are so busy with Church and public duties and so solicitous about the temporal and eternal well being of others, that they are strangely forgetful and negligent of the welfare of their own children. This type of woman is restless and meddlesome. She wouldn't admit it, but she is. She would be offended, because she thinks she is doing the Lord's work. She cannot rest until she is a member of every important Church committee and she would experience deep humiliation if she failed to attend a single funeral or occupied a prominent place as a helper and sympathizer in times of death. Indeed, she has an obsession that prefuneral arrangements could not be arranged without her, and that no neighbor could bear sorrow or endure grief unless she is on hand. This is not a stricture on the Christ-like ministrations and tender sympathy of beautiful women of the spirit who, like their Lord, go about doing good. They are the elect of God. They are the salt of earth. They bear upon their bodies the marks of their Lord. Without them this world would be a dreary place. But it is a criticism of those mothers who have an itch for publicity, who neglect their children in order to gather gossip and retail the same, who are never so happy as when away from home attending to other people's business when their own is sadly in need of attention,

who lavish themselves and their treasure upon heathen across the water while their husbands and children are developing skepticism at home because of their poiseless, balanceless, and senseless activities. It sometimes requires more of the grace of God to stay at home and live a Christlike life and rear Christian families than to leave the cares and duties of home and mix with congenial action. The gadaboutist is a sorry excuse for a mother. There is a time for all things.

The ideal mother need not be a college graduate, a leader in literary clubs, a brilliant conversationalist, a social star, or a big worker in the Church. These things are well and good and are not to be despised. If a woman can be a great mother and make an ideal home and in addition be and do these things, she presents herself as a more versatile woman than her neighbor—who can only be a great mother and wife. But in this age, when there are so many perverted conceptions of the functions and the rights of women, it is in order to emphasize the fact that the home is pre-eminently the place of woman, that her chief functions are home functions, that her highest and holiest rights are home rights, and that her sublimest privilege is the privilege of motherhood. The feminist movement is one phase of our modern unrest, which unrest is growing at an alarming

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rate. This unrest is felt in the theological, the social, the political, and the industrial realms as well as in the realm of so-called woman's rights. Revolution and evolution are in the atmosphere. The old order of things is being violently assailed. Modern thought has permeated the body politic. In our rush to cast off old garments we are in danger of finding ourselves improperly and sparingly clothed. Poiseless radicalism is in a way more undesirable than hopeless conservatism. The extreme reactionary and the extreme radical are alike undesirable citizens.

The feminist movement in England relegates to a back seat the highest and holiest associations of womanhood and motherhood. If women are overwhelmingly convinced that the ballot is necessary to protect their rights and guarantee happiness and exalt the home, it might not be a bad idea to accord to them the high privilege of voting — if for no other reason than to prove to them in *peaceful fashion* the futility of their dreams and the unwisdom of their position. In a comparatively short time they will automatically adjust themselves to their normal life and functions and regard their much coveted privilege as a nuisance, a bore, and a burden. Most women want to vote because they can't. It resolves itself largely into a question of Eve and the apple. Ennui will follow acquisition.

God in His wisdom gave to woman greater rights than He accorded to man — and in a sense higher gifts. She is a more delicate spiritual instrument. She is more susceptible to divine impressions. She is naturally more religious. She is capable of greater love. She can bear pain and suffering with more grace. Her ideals are higher, her life purer, her compassion vaster. In deeds of mercy, in acts of love, in expressions of sympathy she outranks us. She is more beautiful and more winsome, more tender and more gentle, more long suffering and more kind. These gifts beget rights and insure privileges. They invest her with peculiar charm. They render her well nigh sacred in our eyes. About her is thrown the protection of the stronger sex. She is idealized, apotheosized. In her normal relationship she rules as queen, but when she tries to operate in realms beyond the confines of her own vast realm she compromises her dignity, loses much of her charm, and forfeits her tender grace and winsome attractiveness. Woman's rights may be defined as the God given privilege of marrying the choice of her heart, enjoying the gift and privilege of motherhood, reigning as queen with her husband and children in her home, pouring unlimitedly the treasures of her life into the life of her children, and being free at any time to mingle her life and talents with the life and

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talents of the outside world, provided such action be compatible with home duties and privileges.

It strikes me that these are holy and high rights, sacred privileges, enough responsibility, food for happiness. The rights of a mother are as measureless as is the stupendousness of her responsibility. Who can fathom her joy when her little child nestles close to her? Who can know the height and the depth and the length and the breadth of love as she is given to know it? Who can hold such close fellowship with God as she holds, when, with a mother's heart and a mother's trust, she dedicates her child to God and begs for wisdom and goodness to meet the awful responsibility? She has rights enough and to spare.

The ideal mother is above all a *woman*, a womanly woman. She is a follower of Christ, an open confessor of Him, a woman of deep and sincere religious experience, knowing her Lord as Friend, walking and talking with Him, living from day to day in His presence and under the shadow of His wing. (For how can she be an ideal mother, if she is not a Christian woman?) The ideal mother places a higher premium upon the welfare of her children than upon all that the world can give in the way of pleasures, power, notoriety, fame, or any other creature. The ideal mother has a great big

conception of motherhood. She magnifies her office. She enlarges her calling. She appreciates her responsibility. She is ready for the sacrifice, the suffering, the abandonment. Her life belongs to her children. It is not hers. She finds her life by losing it. She shall lose it if she try to save it. She knows that this great law is peculiarly applicable to her. The ideal mother is not lazy, not selfish, not jealous natured, not supersensitive, not over careful of her "rights," not a pessimist, for these shortcomings are certain and logical inheritances and acquisitions of her children. She must live beautifully, serve graciously, love wondrously, suffer cheerfully, sacrifice willingly, and sympathize readily — and demand respect, obedience, consideration, service and love from her children. Some mothers claim so much love for their children that they find themselves unable to exact obedience, to administer discipline, to punish, or to deprive their children of any pleasure, whether wholesome or harmful. They *think* this is exalted love, but in reality it is a lesser love. They do not love them enough to withhold the harmful or to demand the helpful thing. The ideal mother does not love her children after this fashion. She loves them enough to administer discipline if need be.

For fear that I shall be misunderstood in regard to what I have said on woman's rights, let

me add this: I glory in the pluck and will power of the great company of worthy women who, for one or many reasons, have not married, but who have refused to live lives of idleness or to be a burden on loved ones or society and have launched boldly out into the great big critical world of action, living lives of usefulness, rendering a high order of service, doing their part of the world's work, and meanwhile keeping themselves unspotted from the world. And I am thinking that the men of the world should accord to such brave women a peculiar degree of business hospitality and extend to them the right hand of fellowship.

X

“AND A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM ”

There are some wonderfully tender and far-reaching sentiments in the Bible. The Bible tells us that God is going to wipe away all tears from our eyes and there will be no night there. The Bible tells us that at eventime there will be light, and God even marks a little sparrow when it falls to the ground. The Bible tells us that God will tenderly wrap His arms around us and we may hide ourselves in the secret of His presence. The Bible tells us that Christ, even Christ, will come as Guest into the homes of our hearts and live with us, if we let Him — and it tells us that a little child shall lead them.

A little child shall lead them. How? Where? How can a little child lead when it can't even walk? Where can a little child lead when it knows not where to go itself? And yet a little child shall lead, for the Book says so. *How?* By its guilelessness, and purity, and trust. *Where?* Into guilelessness, and purity, and trust.

The most guileless thing in the world, because

the most innocent, a little child in guileless fashion leads us into a more winsome guilelessness. They know no deceit, they have no schemes, they are free from the duplex life. The world is full of guile. Its motives are complex. Deceit is a common commodity. How refreshing, how inspiring, amid it all, to watch a little child in whom there is no guile live its little life from day to day with the shine of God's face on it and the beauty of God's life in it! In such contemplation we are led from guile into guilelessness by the beckoning hand and the gesturing heart and the winsome eye of a little child. Oh, that our Father may give to us at the hands of the little children of the world more of their guilelessness!

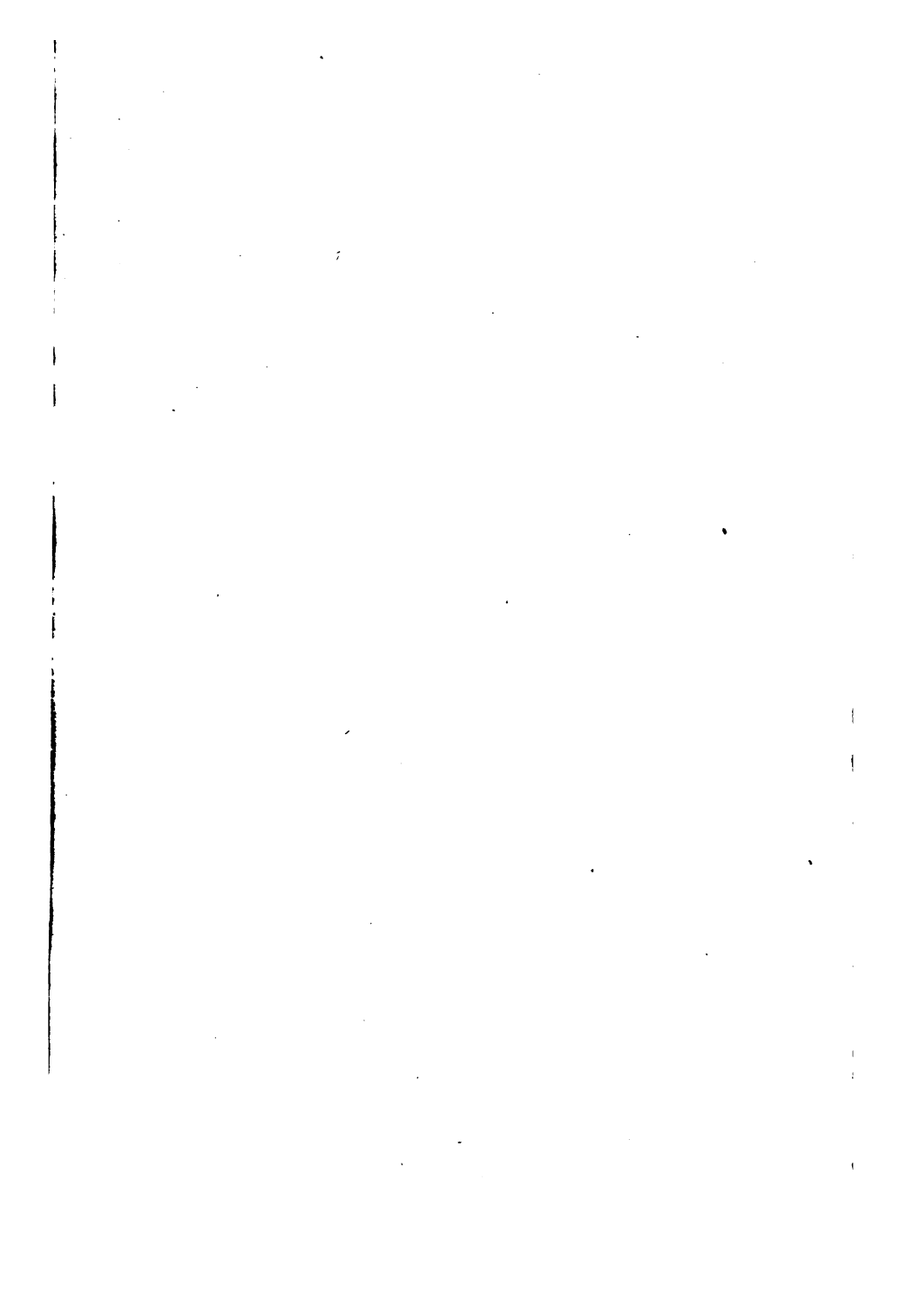
The purity of a little child is proverbial. No impure thoughts flit through their little minds. No bad night dreams of daylight experiences disturb their little sleep, so sound and so sweet. No impure and unholy desires rack their little frames and end in unrest of soul. They are as pure as the dew of the night which hides itself in the bosom of a white rose. They are as pure as the lily of the field the spotlessness of whose raiment attracted the notice of the Master of the world. To live with this incarnated purity day after day, to breathe its fragrance, and to contemplate its beauty renders us more pure and more spotless. And how

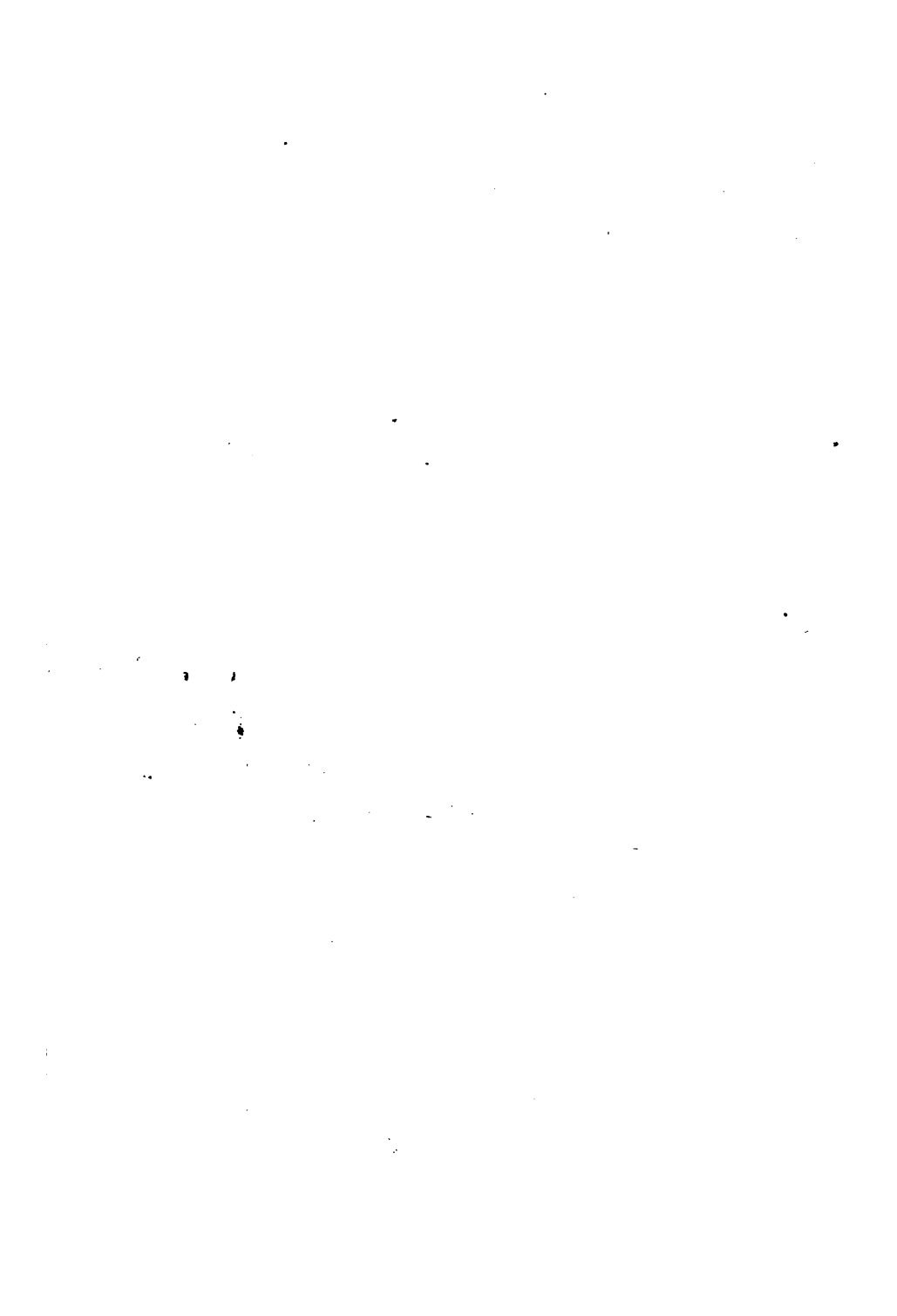
we do feel the need of some lily-white purifying influence ever and anon as we pass through the mud and scum of life with garments which God gave us to keep unspotted from the world! Men are naturally so impure of thought, impure of speech, impure of life. The double standard has played havoc with us. We men — God help us — are not worthy to touch the seamless robe of our glorified Lord, and some of us are not even worthy to hold in our soiled hands the radiantly white form of a little child. But a little child shall lead us into the purer life. May our Father help us to bow our heads by the cradles of the world and catch a splendid inspiration to live lives of stainless purity!

The trust of a little child is the sweetest of sights. They do not doubt anything. With wide-eyed wonder they believe all we tell them. The world to them is so various, so beautiful, so new, so wonderful. Life is radiant and rich and a beautiful poem. Little children are flowers that bloom in the spring. They are little flowers that open their eyes and ears and mouths all day, drinking in in trustful fashion all of the good things sent by God — and at twilight they close their eyes and follow God into the land of sleep. They are not naturally afraid of the dark or ghosts or any other evil creature. It is only when some ugly natured or thoughtless person brings into their little lives these evil

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guests that they are afraid. The trust of a little child! To them Jesus is so real, so near, so natural. To them God is so good, *so* good. To them mother and father with all of their sins are without fault, without blemish. Small wonder that Christ said it were better that a mill stone be hanged about our neck and we be cast into the deep sea than to offend one of these little ones! How much we need the trust of little children! We are so wise in the accumulated wisdom of the world that we cannot trust our Father as little children. We are so burnt out and calloused by contact with the world and with our evil natures that life has lost most of its early charm and freshness and poetry. We grope feebly in mist and in fog and in black night for *proofs, proofs, proofs*. But a little child just walks up to Jesus, reaches up its little hand, takes hold of His large hand, and walks along with Jesus, knowing that He will lead gently over the rough places and encouragingly through the dark night. May our Father grant us, who have not faith even as large as a mustard seed, a richer and simpler and fuller trust in Him, through the leading of the little children of the world!







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